



## AICE Newsletter

**February 2017**

*Message from the Editor:*

Greetings from everyone at AICE.

I dedicate this newsletter to the expert panelists who are volunteering at the 2017 AICE Symposium. Further in this issue are their biographies and photos. I would like the opportunity in my introduction to cordially thank them for volunteering their expertise at this important event, made even more noteworthy considering the relevance of the topic – three-year degrees, to most academic institutions with graduate programs.

I have had the pleasure to meet many of the panelists in person, and can attest that they are experts in their field. Actually, many have authored publications or presented sessions that were the cornerstone of my training in credential evaluation. After many years, I continue to use those same publications in training professionals in workshops, conferences, and in my own organization. I expect that the 2017 AICE Symposium will be a celebration of expertise, a training opportunity, and a renewed understanding of three-year degrees in bridging the professions of credential evaluation and graduate admissions. Thanks to our panelists, I expect this event to generate a resource which will be used by credential evaluators far into the future.

Each AICE Symposium also presents the organization with the opportunity to update the AICE Credential Evaluation Standards. The Standards document is a dynamic document, and is the only one of its kind regulating the profession and codifying the practice of credential evaluation by endorsed member organizations. It is an important goal of this, and each subsequent AICE Symposium, to generate research, to update our knowledge, and to come to a mutual understanding on complex issues. I'm confident that in 2017, we will be successful, thanks in no small part to the individuals we are participating. I invite everyone to attend, and look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,  
Aleks Morawski  
*Editor, Chair Research Publication*  
*Association of International Credential Evaluators*

## AICE 2017 Symposium:

The 2017 AICE symposium will take place April 5 – 6 in Minneapolis, MN following AACRAO's annual meeting. The Planning Committee is busy preparing an engaging program of panel discussions focusing on Setting the Standard for Graduate Admissions – Three-year degrees and other admissions dilemmas.

In this issue, we are pleased to share the details of the third module – Beyond South Asia and Bologna: Three-year degrees from Australia, South Africa and Israel

### Module 3.

#### Beyond South Asia and Bologna: Three-year degrees from Australia, South Africa and Israel ...



Three-year bachelor degrees in Australia and South Africa are modeled after the UK educational system. Australian Bachelor's (pass or ordinary) degrees require three years of full-time study or the part-time equivalent. These qualifications include Bachelor of Arts, Science and Commerce, i.e., BA, BSc. and BCom; Bachelor of Applied Science (BAppSc) and Bachelor of Business Administration (BBusAdmin). In Australia, four-year Bachelor's degrees exist in professional fields like Engineering, Education, Law, etc. An Honours degree usually follows an (Ordinary) three-year Bachelor's degree. It comprises one year of study in an area of specialization. Students are typically selected to pursue the honours degree based on academic achievement. The three-year Bachelor's degree is often accepted for access to higher education degrees. An Honours Degree is normally required for access to higher research degrees.

A major part of the history of education in South Africa has to do with apartheid which was first established in 1949. Apartheid became dismantled between 1990 and 1993 and the years since have allowed for all racial groups to play "catch-up" with education. Admission into Bachelor's degree programs is traditionally based on completion of year 12 (standard 10). Students sit for the Senior Certificate Examination (an external examination) as they approach the end of standard 10. The results of these examinations will determine whether one may be admitted into a Bachelor's degree program. In South Africa Bachelor's degrees require three years of full-time study or the part-time equivalent. These qualifications include Bachelor of Arts, Science and Commerce, i.e., BA, BSc. and BCom and the Bachelor of Social Science (BSocSc) degrees. Four to six-year bachelor degrees exist in professional fields like engineering, law, architecture and medicine. An Honours degree usually follows a three-year Bachelor's degree.

It comprises one year of study in an area of specialization. Students are selected to pursue the Honours degree based on academic achievement.

In Israel, admission to higher education requires the Matriculation Certificate (Teudat Bagrut) and the Psychometric Exam, which bears resemblance to the SAT in the USA. Historically, only universities could offer Bachelor's level programs, but that option has long since been extended to colleges. Bachelor's Degree programs in Israel are typically three years in length. Exceptions to this are Bachelor's Degrees in Nursing, Pharmacy, Education and Engineering, which are four years in length and medical and dental degrees which take six years. Degrees are heavily focused on the major field of study, often with little time remaining for electives in unrelated subjects. However, pursuit of double majors is quite common. In contrast to three-year degrees in Europe and South Asia, Israeli three-year Bachelor's Degrees are widely recognized as equivalent to four-year bachelor's degrees in the US. One reason for this assessment is the level of study required to earn the *Bagrut* certificate at the end of High School. The *Bagrut* can be considered to be on the level of the UK's A-Level exams. Undergraduate transfer credit is awarded in the US for *Bagrut* exams in academic subjects completed at the level of 3 or higher (on a scale of 1 to 6). As such, students entering Israeli universities can be considered to have already completed one year of undergraduate level study, covering the typical general education requirements of US universities. In addition, academic requirements in Israel tend to be rigorous. Students are typically older than their peers abroad on account of mandatory military service and the common practice of taking time off to work or travel prior to matriculation. In addition, the number of courses taken per year is generally higher than at US institutions and summers are often spent preparing for exams or writing term papers.

## TOPICS

### Beyond South Asia and Bologna: Three-year degrees from Australia, South Africa and Israel ...

#### AUSTRALIA

- Graduates from 3-year Bachelor's degrees are often admitted into Master's programs in Australian universities. This is almost universal for non-research based Master's programs.
  - *Should the same practice be true for US institutions with non-research based Master's programs?*
- What are the employment implications for graduates of Australian 3-year Bachelor's programs in Australia and in the USA?
  - *Australian Bachelor's degrees vary in duration depending on the area of study.*
  - *Are the graduates of 3-year Bachelor's degrees (Arts, Commerce, etc.) prepared to enter the workforce or should these degrees be considered preparatory for the additional training (either an Honours degree or a Master's degree)?*

#### SOUTH AFRICA

- Since admission to Bachelor's degree programs is based on successful passing of external examinations, better prepared students are admitted.
  - *Would this external examination serve as an extra level of college preparation (such as A-levels in the UK) or as a compensation for uneven level of secondary education in secondary schools (such as CXC exams in the Caribbean)?*
  - *Are graduates of 3-year Bachelor's programs accepted into Master's programs by South African universities?*
  - *What are employment implications for graduates of South African 3-year Bachelor's degrees in South Africa and in the USA?*

#### ISRAEL

- Should the grades on Bagrut exams be taken into account when deciding on whether these exams should be equivalent to college-level academic work?
  - *Should 3-year Bachelor's degrees from Israel be treated differently from 3-year degrees from other countries? Why or why not?*
  - *What are employment implications for graduates of Israeli 3-year Bachelor's programs in Israel and in the USA?*

## Distinguished Panelists at the AICE Symposium:

Alexander Agafonov, Ph.D. is the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Globe Language Services, Inc. He holds a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Policy Studies from the University at Albany (SUNY), M.S. in Higher Education Administration from the University at Albany (SUNY) and B.A. in Foreign Languages/ Linguistics from Murmansk State Humanities University in Russia. He has worked in education for more than 20 years as a teacher, administrator, researcher and consultant. Prior to joining Globe Language Services Dr. Agafonov served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at ASA College in NYC. His extensive experience in the field of International Education includes advising international students, serving as PDSO (Primary Designated School Official), developing articulation agreements and dual-degree/ degree completion programs with US and foreign institutions, evaluating foreign credentials, and doing research in the field of comparative education. Dr. Agafonov served on accreditation and program review teams for Middle States Commission on Higher Education and New York State Education Department. He currently serves as Chair of the Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc (AICE).



**Stephanie Ingvaldson** has close to a decade of experience in enrollment management and evaluation, working at UCLA Undergraduate Admissions with both domestic and international students, and most recently at California State University, Fresno, where she is involved with the recruitment, admission, and enrollment steps of both undergraduate and graduate international students. Ms. Ingvaldson oversees the International Student Services and Programs office at Fresno State and serves as the current Network Leader for the Admissions and Credential Evaluation Knowledge Community of NAFSA.



**Ann M. Koenig** has been an associate director with AACRAO International since 2002. Her career in international education spans more than 25 years, including foreign credential evaluation in professional evaluation services, and campus-based work in international undergraduate and graduate admissions, student records management, academic advising and transfer credit evaluation, at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, a University of Maryland University College program in Germany, Golden Gate University in San Francisco, and the University of California, Berkeley. Ann has done in-depth research on education in several countries. She is the author of the ECE monograph *An Overview of the Educational System of Albania* (1993), co-author of the PIER workshop report on Poland (1992) and

AACRAO Country Guide *The Educational System of the Russian Federation* (2008), and contributor to NAFSA's *A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World* (1999), the AACRAO EDGE online database, AACRAO's *Guide to Bogus Institutions and Documents* (2006), The AACRAO International Guide (2010 and 2016 editions), AACRAO's *Transfer Handbook* (2015), and AACRAO's quarterly journal *College & University*.

A frequent workshop trainer and conference presenter, Ann specializes in sharing information on country educational systems, best practices in international academic record review and admissions, and academic credential fraud awareness. She has presented at professional development and training events sponsored by AACRAO, NAFSA, NAGAP, EAIE, and other organizations in the U.S. and Europe.





**Ujjaini Sahasrabudhe** is the director of the Office of Graduate Admission at University of Southern California. She is responsible for coordinating with academic programs and managing graduate admission-related operations for the university. She holds master's degrees in human development and family studies, as well as social and multicultural foundations of education. She has presented at conferences such as NAFSA, NAGAP, Association for the Study of Higher Education and Comparative and International Education Society. She also serves as the managing editor for NAFSA's IEM Spotlight e-newsletter.



**Annetta Stroud** began working with AACRO in 2008 in the role of Senior Evaluator and Training Coordinator, and is currently the Associate Director for Training and Program Development. She has worked in the field of international education for over 15 years in both public and private institutions in various positions in international admissions and credential evaluation, student services and academic management. Her current role with AACRAO allows her to engage in the research of international comparative education and support the training of professionals in the field, and

she has presented at various conferences including both AACRAO and NAFSA annual and regionals and the Education USA MENA Forum. Annetta holds a B.A. in Music from the University of New Mexico, M.A. in Adult Education from San Francisco State University, and an Ed.M. in Human Resource Development from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.



**Robert Watkins** has been in the field of international admissions and credential evaluation for 40 years all of it at The University of Texas at Austin where he is Assistant Director of Admissions in the Graduate and International Admissions Center. A member of NAFSA, AACRAO and EAIE, he has presented frequently on international credentials at annual meetings of all three organizations. He is former Chair of the NAFSA Admissions Section (ADSEC) now known as International Enrollment

Management (IEM), former Vice President for International Education on the AACRAO Board of Directors, and served as Chair of the International Student Records Committee of the NCAA (2002-11). He served on and then chaired the former National Council on the Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials (1992-2000) as a NAFSA representative and was co-author of the PIER Canada Workshop (1989) and PIER Philippines Workshop (2001) and now serves on the AACRAO International Education Standards Council (IESC) which formulates the Credential Advice in AACRAO EDGE.

## AICE® Needs You:

Dear Friend,

The Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE), a non-profit professional association of international credential evaluators from private credentialing services and U.S. academic institutions, will hold our second annual Symposium on April 5-6 at the Hilton Hotel in Minneapolis, MN.

We're currently looking for sponsors for the 2017 Symposium. Can we count on your support?

The theme for the 2017 Symposium is "Setting the Standard for Graduate Admissions: Three-year degrees and other admissions challenges." Our 2016 Phoenix Symposium attracted more than 30 high-level decision makers from academic institutions, non-profit education associations and private credential evaluation services from around the country. We anticipate the attendance will double for the 2017 Symposium.

We hope we can count on you to sponsor an event at the AICE 2017 Symposium. Please consider a sponsorship donation from the options listed in the attached Sponsorship Form. As a sponsor, your donation will be recognized at our event in several ways to help increase brand visibility and make a lasting impression. Your name will be placed on all materials and banners that publicize the event, including our website, and you will be recognized verbally at the event itself. If you wish to include any merchandise in addition to your sponsorship, it will be displayed at the Symposium for the attendees.

We hope that we can count on you to help support our cause. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [info@alice-eval.org](mailto:info@alice-eval.org).

Thanks in advance for your consideration!

Sincerely  
Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert  
President & Treasurer  
Association of International Credential Evaluators  
[www.alice-eval.org](http://www.alice-eval.org)

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## AICE® Forum Highlights

This section includes highlights from the monthly AICE® Forum in February, 2017. Although this is meant to serve as a synopsis of the discussion, additional details can be obtained by contacting the Members listed by each topic.



## NCUK – International Foundation/Year One/Etc. Programs

Northern Consortium (NCUK) is a pathway/foundation program based in UK (<https://www.ncuk.ac.uk/>). It alleges equivalence to A-levels, but not external examinations are conducted

by recognized examination boards. Their structure does seem similar, in that they take four modules, one being English and the other three in a designated stream. The grading is a little different, it comes from 30% midterm at semester and 70% final. They don't seem to have any accreditation, but say that their program was assessed by NARIC in 2014 and concluded that they are comparable to GCE A levels (NQF Level 3).

AICE members suggested that, while UK NARIC recommendation is a strong indication of the programs quality, it does not grant regional academic accreditation, and any admission or partnership with these programs is at the discretion of academic institutions after review of the programs.

*~Kisha Cranston (University of Kansas, AICE Affiliate)*

## Ireland – Leaving Certificates

Should Irish leaving certificates be considered for undergraduate credit, if your institution also grants credits for A-level UK examinations?

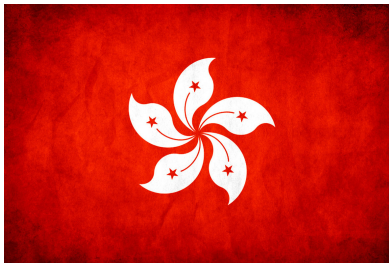


Foreign Credits does not recommend undergraduate credit or advanced standing for Irish leaving certificates.

These are awarded for passing an external examination at the grade 11 level, two years after the Junior Certificate (grade 9). However, several affiliates recommend treating higher level coursework from Irish leaving certificates as like AS-levels. Institutions vary on their transfer credit policies for AS-level examinations. While evaluation agencies like Foreign Credits Inc. tend to be conservative and treat these as equivalent to additional high school-level coursework, academic institutions may treat these as similar to 50% of a full A-level for transfer credit practices.

*~Aleks Morawski (Foreign Credits, AICE Endorsed Member)*

*~Kisha Cranston (University of Kansas, AICE Affiliate)*



## Hong Kong – Grading for secondary school coursework

Most resources on the education system of Hong Kong only list grading scales for the final examination. When an incomplete secondary school credential needs to be evaluated, which grading scale should be used?

In this example, the issuing institution used a British-based scale, given a 40% minimum pass and Hong Kong's relationship with the UK system of education. Barbara Glave of SDR reminded us that for admissions purposes, it helps to look at class ranking. In this example, the ranking was very low, making the student inadmissible to institutions with any degree of selectivity.

*~Barbara Glave (SDR Educational Consultants, AICE Endorsed Member)*

*~Elle Shroyer (University of Oklahoma)*

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## Ethiopia – National Agency for Examinations (NAE)



Based on a questionable certificate issued by “National Agency for Examinations” in Ethiopia, Beth Cotter and Yuriko Bassett shared information on the Ethiopian education system, highlighting the changes which took place in governmental oversight in 1990s and 2000s.

The agency which administers the school-leaving examinations/certificates is known as the National Organization for Examinations (NOE), not the National Agency for Examinations (NAE). However, note that the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency does use the abbreviation NAE in its web address (I don't know how significant that is). The certificate issued upon passing the examinations after the 12th grade is the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Qualification Certificate (EHEEQC), not the University Entrance Examination.

Your student's documents are dated during a period of transition in the Ethiopian educational system. According to the website of the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency, the National Organization for Examinations (NOE) was established in 1997 under the MOE to centralize the administration of examinations. The Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (EGSECE), which represents completion of the 10th grade, started to be given in 2000 and the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate (ESLCE) was terminated in 2002.

In addition, the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Qualification Examination (EHEEQE), representing completion of the 12th grade and admissibility to post-secondary education, was introduced in 2000, but according to EDGE the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Examination (EHEEE), taken after two years of preparatory secondary school to determine admission to post-secondary education, was first given in 2003. The National Educational Assessment and Examination Agency (NEAEA) was given its current name in 2012.

The Ethiopian calendar is based on the Coptic calendar with a leap day every four years. The Ethiopian calendar has 12 months with 30 days each and a 13th month called Pagume with five or six days depending on whether it's a leap year. The end result is that there can be either a 7 or an 8-year difference between the Ethiopian calendar and our calendar, and even sharing information about the Ethiopian calendar. Highlights are included below, and the authenticity of the credential issued by NAE cannot be confirmed.

**~Beth Cotter (Foreign Credential Evaluations Inc, AICE Endorsed Member)**

**~Yuriko Bassett (Azusa Pacific University, AICE Affiliate)**



## Ethiopia - Medco Bio Medical College, three-year Clinical Nurse program

This item raised an interesting discussion about retroactive accreditation, and how to determine if coursework completed in a program or institution that is no longer accredited can be considered to have regional academic accreditation, depending on the time it was completed.

- The institution is reported in the Ethiopian Ministry of Education "accredited Non-Government Higher Education Institutions" and In the 2013 version of "Higher Education Relevance and Quality Assurance Agency (HERQA) - List of accredited Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia"
- The institution on the list is # 52 -and it reports the following: "Accreditation period - Since September 2002 to August 2004 [Only until the 1146 students enrolled in 2006 complete their study]" - for the program in Clinical Nursing, the program I am evaluating. Other programs have extended "accreditation."
- Finally, the individual completed the program in 2007.

~Mario Caruso (*International Evaluation Services, LLC, AICE Endorsed Member*)

~Aleks Morawski (*Foreign Credits, AICE Endorsed Member*)

## Publications

- AACRAO has a new publication: [The AACRAO International Guide: A Resource for International Education Professionals](#). Beth Cotter and Jasmin Saidi contributed to this publication (section on Diploma Mills and Outsourcing International Credential Evaluations with a Historic Perspective). You may order this publication online or by post.
- A number of AICE members are contributing authors for the [NAFSA Online Guide on Education Systems Around the World](#), including the following members:

Alan Saidi – *Republic of Korea*

Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert – *Hong Kong, Iran, Senegal, United Kingdom*

## Professional Development and Events

It's not too early to start thinking about the **2017 AICE Symposium, April 5-6, 2017 in Minneapolis, MN**. This years theme is ***"Setting the Standard for Graduate Admissions: Three-year degrees and other admissions dilemmas"***

**Register Now!**

## Conferences and Presentations

**“Ask the Credential Doctor”** WAIE (Wisconsin Association of International Educators) Annual Conference, March 10, 2017, Sheboygan, WI. (Aleks Morawski)

**“International Credential Evaluations: A historic perspective and benefits of outsourcing”** WAIE (Wisconsin Association of International Educators) Annual Conference, March 10, 2017, Sheboygan, WI. (Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert)

**“International Credential Evaluations: A historic perspective and benefits of outsourcing”** MAIE (Michigan Association of International Educators) Annual Conference, March 2017, Lansing, MI. (Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert)

**“Credentials Fraud and Diploma Mills: A Global and Growing Problem,”** AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) Annual Conference, April 3, 2017, 8:00 AM – 9:15 AM, Minneapolis, MN. (Yuriko Bassett, Drew Feder, and Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert)

**“Undergraduate Benchmarks in International Credential Evaluation,”** AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) Annual Conference, April 4, 2017, 3:34 PM – 4:45 PM, Minneapolis, MN. (Beth Cotter, Karee Head, Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert)

**“International Graduate Admissions - Examining the Requirements for International Degrees”** NAFSA Annual Conference, June 2, 2017, 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM, Los Angeles, CA. (Drew Feder, Aleks Morawski, Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert)

**“Credentials Fraud and Diploma Mills: History and 2017 Update,”** NAFSA Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA. (Drew Feder, and Jasmin Saidi-Kuehnert)

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## Blogs

ACEI hosts **“Academic Exchange,”** a blog on education-related topics:

[Visit Blog!](#)

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## MEMBERSHIP

Interested in becoming a member of AICE? Please visit our website at [www.aice-eval.org](http://www.aice-eval.org) and learn about our membership categories and contact us at [info@aice-eval.org](mailto:info@aice-eval.org) with any questions you may have.

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